

Message Text

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51

ACTION SS-30

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R 281100Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 375

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 21550

EXDIS - STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS VS

SUBJ: GAO AND CIVILIAN PRISONER ISSUE

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

REF: A. STATE 239793 B. SAIGON 20739

1. ON MY RETURN FROM PARIS I HAVE PERSONALLY REVIEWED REFTELS, THE LETTER FROM CONGRESSMAN TIERNAN AND THE ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ACCOMPANYING IT. ONE CAN ONLY COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THIS IS SIMPLY ANOTHER CHAPTER IN THE AMAZINGLY SUCCESSFUL PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES OF THE DRVN. THE ADDITION OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES ONLY ADDS A CLOAK OF PLAUSIBLE UNIVERSAL CONCERN TO AN OPERATION QUITE OBVIOUSLY DIRECTED AT THE GVN.

2. EVEN THOUGH I AM CONVINCED ANY OBJECTIVE EXAMINATION WOULD COMPLETELY DISPROVE THESE ALLEGATIONS, THE MERE FACT THAT THE GVN HAD PERMITTED THE USG TO CONDUCT IT WOULD IMMEDIATELY BE SEIZED ON AND EXPLOITED BY THE DRVN AS EVIDENCE OF ITS COLONIAL STATUS UNDER U.S. DOMINATION. EVEN WITH A TOTAL REJECTION OF THESE CHARGES BY THE GAO SERIOUS DAMAGE WOULD BE THE INEVITABLE RESULT.

3. IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BECOME A PARTY TO AN OPERATION WHOSE OBJECTIVE IS TO DECEIVE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. THEREFORE, I WILL NOT PERMIT ANY ELEMENT OF THE U.S. DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO COOPERATE IN ANY WAY WITH SUCH AN INVESTIGATION BY THE GAO. THE PRESIDENT MAY, OF COURSE, ON THE ADVICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, RELIEVE ME OF MY RESPONSIBILITIES AT ANY MOMENT. UNTIL THAT ACTION IS TAKEN, NO MEMBER OF ANY ELEMENT OF THIS MISSION
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WILL BE PERMITTED TO DISCUSS, MAKE ANY PAPERS AVAILABLE, NOR COOPERATE IN ANY WAY, WHATSOEVER, WITH ANY SUCH INVESTIGATION. ADDITIONALLY, NO MEMBER OF ANY ELEMENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO

CONTACT ANY ELEMENT OF THE GVN REGARDING SUCH AN INVESTIGATION BY THE GAO.

4. QUITE FRANKLY, I DOUBT THAT THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES, WHO HAS ALWAYS ZEALOUSLY GUARDED THE INTEGRITY AND EXCELLENT REPUTATION OF THE GAO, WOULD PERSONALLY PERMIT ITS INVOLVEMENT IN AN EXERCISE WHICH CAN ONLY LEAD TO A PROGRESSIVE PROSTITUTION OF THAT INTEGRITY AND REPUTATION. I CAN ONLY SURMISE HE HAS NOT BEEN PERSONALLY INFORMED OF THE PROPOSAL.

5. I AGREE THAT THE PROPER COURSE OF THE DEPARTMENT IS, AS OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF REF (B), I.E., TO INFORM THE GAO THAT QUESTIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY MAKE SUCH AN INVESTIGATION BY THE GAO IMPOSSIBLE, THAT IT SHOULD SO INFORM THOSE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS REQUESTING SUCH AN INVESTIGATION, ADDING THAT THE QUERY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE. IF DEPARTMENT SO DESIRES, I WILL BE QUITE HAPPY TO FURNISH, OVER MY SIGNATURE, A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY WHICH WILL DEAL WITH THE TIEMAN LETTER AND THE QUESTIONS APPENDED BY HIS ASSISTANT, MR. MALONEY.
MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS - STADIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O - MR. LUERS.

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